

DAU Joins Fort Belvoir in Supporting Security Efforts

In Wake of Attacks, Campus Security Intensified

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The September 11th horrific attacks on American soil stand as the greatest loss of life from a terrorist activity in our nation's history. Innocent people – our friends, neighbors, and family members – paid a terrible price for the murderous acts. The events of that Tuesday morning left deep wounds in the hearts of Americans and involved the entire nation. At DAU, academic life came to an abrupt halt as Fort Belvoir and the University reacted to the attacks by closing, followed by a mass exodus of staff and students heading home on that unforgettable Tuesday morning.

Fort Belvoir, which was already conducting a limited access-control exercise, responded to the attacks by immediately implementing DoD directives to increase the installation's threat posture to Force Protection Condition "Delta" – the highest level of threat protection.

Belvoir's soldiers immediately went into action, conducting 100 percent identification checks of personnel entering the installation and performing inspections of vehicles attempting to enter the post.

"We've implemented procedures to safeguard our residents and facilities," said Fort Belvoir Garrison Commander Col. Kurt A. Weaver. "Our emergency operations center will remain open and operational for as long as necessary to coordinate activities and respond to evolving requirements."

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Army Sgt. 1st Class Matt Linton, a member of the DAU Human Resources staff, loads donated items for transport to the Pentagon and distribution to the Pentagon rescue workers.

Aftermath

Since Wednesday, Sept. 12, Fort Belvoir and all U.S. Army installations have changed their security posture to Force Protection Condition "Charlie" – requiring all those attempting to enter Fort Belvoir, and other military installations, to show photo identification and to conduct random inspection of vehicles.

Wednesday morning, the day after the attack, security checks at the post gates

snarled traffic; in fact, some members of the Belvoir workforce spent up to four hours waiting in traffic to get on post.

"We want to let employees at Fort Belvoir and the local community know that we understand the frustration and irritation that may have occurred Wednesday morning as a result of the tremendous delays experienced at our gates," Weaver said. "But they were unavoidable, given the recent terrorist ac-

tivity and our heightened security requirements ... We encourage everyone to allow extra time for commutes.”

As a result of the commuters’ gridlock and heightened state of security, a number of facilities on the post closed, and a number of events scheduled that week were cancelled.

Also cancelled was the Fourth Annual International Acquisition/Procurement Seminar – Pacific, which was to be hosted at the main campus Sept. 17-20.

Moving Forward

But despite the cruelty of the hour, the smoke, the fire, and the shock, people did not give in to full-scale panic.

While employees were struggling with the traffic, soldiers were mobilized to the Pentagon to assist the rescue and recovery efforts. At the same time, per-

sonnel from the Belvoir DAU-DSMC community were involved with some support efforts of their own – graciously donating baked goods, bottled water, hand wipes, Gatorade, and other items for the Pentagon rescue workers.

Many showed support by posting ribbons and American flags throughout the campus. Many donated blood. Many participated in the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance, on Friday, Sept. 14, in Howell Auditorium. Many lighted candles that same Friday night at a candlelight vigil to show that America is united. And many kept an intense vigil by their TVs, as the full extent of the tragedy emerged.

The generosity of the American people in times of disaster has always been exceptional, and during this worst-of-all-times, the outpouring of help only reaffirmed what much of the world has wit-

nessed first-hand: Americans are the most generous, giving people on the face of the earth.

New Sense of “Normal”

What will it be like to live and work in the post-September 11th era – operating inside security lines, with gate checks and doors closed? It’s not clear what the future will bring. It will be days or weeks before we know the particulars of the death and destruction – before we fully absorb the magnitude of our losses. Fort Belvoir and DAU, however, will continue to take measures aimed at safeguarding staff and students.

What we know already is shocking and overwhelming. But we also know that Americans have come together and united as a nation to rescue, to support, to act, and to move forward according to American principles and values.

Army Sgt. Sandra Morse (left), a member of the DAU Video Services staff, distributes bottled water to Louisiana rescue workers preparing a batch of gumbo.

